

Budget Update for First Steps Maternity Support Services/Infant Case Management Providers

On Thursday, December 18 the Governor released both the 2009 Proposed Supplemental Budget and the 2009-11 Proposed Budget to the public.

Statements from Department of Social and Health Services Secretary, Robin Arnold-Williams, can be found on the agency's website:

- DSHS – <http://fortress.wa.gov/dshs/maa/News/BudgetmessagefromSecretary.pdf>

Doug Porter, Assistant Secretary of DSHS, Health and Recovery Services Administration, posted a message to DSHS staff and stakeholders, which includes a link to the HRSA analysis of the Governor's budget: <http://fortress.wa.gov/dshs/maa/News/Budget.htm>

Significant points from the HRSA budget proposal that will impact the First Steps Program and clients are:

- The CSO Family Planning Nurse Program will be terminated effective January 31, 2009
 - Contact Sheryl Hermanson, Program Manager at hermasl@dshs.wa.gov
- The First Steps Child Care Program will be eliminated within the next six months
 - Contact Cathy Hewins, Program Manager at hewincj@dshs.wa.gov
- First Steps Maternity Support Services, is required to implement a 5% reduction in the program budget, effective February 1, 2009
 - The First Steps regional meetings last November and December launched a body of work by state staff over the last year that will help influence the decisions necessary to comply with the proposed budget cut. There will be a significant amount of work to accomplish during January 2009, and we will be requesting stakeholder input that will require very quick turn around times.

We will do our best to keep you informed and as up-to-date as possible as we learn more and as additional information is understood about the changes described above.